Huge jewellery collection amassed by Imelda Marcos is sent for appraisal by Philippines government as it decides whether to sell it off

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- **Auction houses are evaluating the jewellery collection of Imelda Marcos**
- **The jewels were seized in 1986 when the Marcos family fled the Philippines**
- **Among the large collection is a rare 25-carat vivid pink Indian diamond**
- **Last time it was valued at $5million but experts predict its now worth more**

By JENNIFER NEWTON FOR MAILONLINE
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A huge collection of jewellery amassed by Imelda Marcos is being valued by the Philippines government as they decide whether it should be sold off.

The jewels were seized in 1986 when dictator Ferdinand Marcos and his family fled to Hawaii following a popular revolt that ended his two decades in power.

The Marcos family allegedly amassed billions of dollars' worth of ill-gotten wealth, and the dictator's widow, now 86 and a member of Congress, became known for excesses, symbolised by her huge shoe collection.

Appraiser David Warren examines an ornate necklace once owned by Imelda Marcos at the Philippines Central Bank

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The jewellery was amassed by Imelda Marcos, now 86, who became known for excesses, symbolised by her huge shoe collection

The jewellery, which is currently being evaluated, comprises of three sets seized in various locations across the Philippines.

When it was last appraised in 1991, it was valued at between $5million to $7million but is now likely to have significantly risen in value.

The pieces include a barrel-shaped diamond worth at least $5million and a Cartier diamond tiara, that's likely to be significantly more than the previous estimate of $50,000.

The collection is being appraised by Christies and Sotheby's auction houses this week before the government decides whether to auction it.

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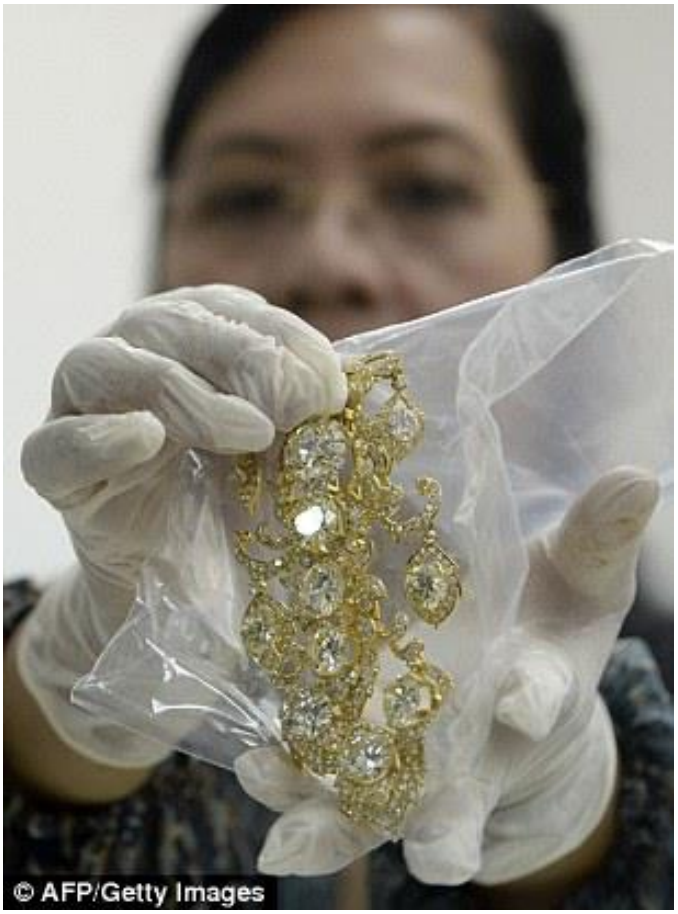

The jewellery, which is currently being evaluated, comprises of three sets seized in various locations across the Philippines before it is decided whether it should be sold off

The extensive jewellery collection includes very rare and exceptional pieces which experts say is like something royalty would own

Other options include putting the jewellery in a museum, with the accessories currently being stored in a vault at the Philippines Central Bank.

David Warren, who headed a a Christie's auction house team that inspected the jewellery said: 'If I didn't know where the collection came from, I would probably say it could have come from a royal person.'

He said the extensive collection includes very rare and exceptional pieces.

A 25-carat Indian pink diamond probably cut in the 18th century and worth at least $5 million was newly discovered to be part of the collection.

It was previously listed as crystal and may have not been previously shown to appraisers.

A pair of earrings that is part of the extensive jewellery collection once owned by the former first lady of the Philippines Imelda Marcos

Appraisers from Christie's auction house examine a necklace. The Marcos family allegedly amassed billions of dollars' worth of ill-gotten wealth

Marcos' briolette-cut or barrel-shaped pink diamond is from India's famous Golconda region, which produced rare finds like the Hope Diamond and a 500-carat diamond that is part of the British crown jewels.

Pink diamonds are very rare. Mr Warren said a 16-carat vivid pink diamond was sold by Christie's this month in Geneva for $28.5 million.

He added that the provenance of the jewellery could radically increase prices should the pieces be auctioned.

The pieces were held up for photographers by customs employees who removed them from plastic wrappings.

They included various necklaces with diamonds ranging from the size of corn kernels to fat almonds, strung together like a set of mini chandeliers.